

and wound the heart of a loving brother or sister which even in after years may cause pain. God grant we may be sunshine Christians. May the words of our mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight. Oh, Lord our strength and our Redeemer.

GOD'S EMPIRE

B. C. MOOMAW

Until recent times men had a very inadequate conception of the material universe. Cultivated Greeks and Romans thought that the earth was its center, and that the stars were mere tapers or spangles not very far removed. The earth itself as they conceived it was a small affair by the side of the earth of our accurate knowledge. When later on some inkling of the truth began to dawn, it was calculated that there must be at least two thousand worlds besides ours, but still we held the center of the cosmos, and around us all the others revolved. Galileo's discovery made the universe several times larger, and as mechanical genius has gone on improving the telescope, more worlds have been added to the widening limits of our vision until a hundred millions of suns, implying a multiplied number of planets, are within view. By adding the camera to the telescope it is estimated that the number of the starry host revealed reaches the astonishing total of two thousand millions. When we remember that these are suns, most of which are many times larger than our sun, and that around each of them revolve numerous planets, we may begin to form some faint conception of God's material empire. But our telescopes and our cameras do not reach to the bounds of the peopled universe. Perhaps we have penetrated merely a hairs-breadth beyond the border. We may by the aid of these wonderful instruments see stars thousands of millions of miles distant, so far away indeed that light itself would consume more than a hundred thousand years in reaching us, but what is this distance compared with the distances of space which has no limits, no bounds? And what reason have we to suppose that this illimitable space is not illumined with blazing suns, animated by splendid worlds whirling about each other in glorious and majestic procession? Then again, why these worlds, unless they are peopled? How many and what kind of intelligences dwell on these numberless planets? That they are populous and vibrant with life, that myriads of creatures doubtless like ourselves inhabit them, scarcely needs an argument. God created man in his own image and likeness, and this inevitable law of being must have operated in all other worlds as well as in ours. Likeness between the sons and the father implies likeness between the sons themselves. Our

brethren people all worlds. When we depart hence it will only be like going from one room of the Father's house to another. And in that other we will find the Father's children, like us and like each other. And over all and in all will be the Father's love. Doubtless we are far more estranged from love in this world, more orphaned, more friendless, more among strangers than we would be in any other. We have no idea that the experiment with sin is being repeated on any other planet. Astronomers tell us that ours is one of the very smallest, and it looks as if God, seeing that for reasons inscrutable to us he must allow this tragedy of sin and death, yet confined it to the narrowest and least important of his many worlds. No wider limits than were absolutely necessary were allowed the ravages of rebellion. What this experiment means to other worlds we do not know, but we have no idea that there is anything like it in any other. There could not possibly be any good reason why the same tragedy should be played out on another stage, or why the same weary role of misery and ruin should be repeated.

The Father's infinite empire is an empire of peace and love. It is like its glorious Creator, and it is his palace in which he lives. Where God dwells there can be only light and love. This was the one world that went astray, and leaving the ninety and nine, how lovingly he sought the wanderer, and how tenderly is he bringing it back to his fold of love. Does he love a world like this, all sin stained and guilty, and hateful in its overflowing iniquity? Ask the mother if she loves her wayward boy. She would die for him. Who made the mother love? "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." Oh world, alien to the Infinite Love; oh soul, so far away from the Heart of Love, learn yet of the love that is seeking thee; learn, and love, and live.

THE BORDER LAND BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

J. L. GILLIN

We conceive our subject to be "The Relation of the Church to the World."

Our terms should be defined that we may not differ on what we believe in common. By the church we mean the body of people ruled by the spirit of Christ.

We shall use the term world in this discussion to signify the ruling ideas of the present age, which are not in accord with Christ's ideas, and by extension those ruled by the world-ideas. So much for definitions. Now to the subject.

The relation of the church to the world is theological and sociological.

Each has an animus of its own. Each in its spirit is mutually exclusive of the other.

The spirit of the church, whenever it is true to the purpose of Jesus is unselfish and sacrificial. The spirit of the world is selfish, self-seeking and self-centered.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," is St. John's exhortation and statement. Jesus said of his disciples, "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world." Speaking of his kingdom he said, "My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight." But this is not monasticism. Neither can the question now under consideration be answered by the old answer of asceticism. Asceticism ought to have died with its age. But unfortunately, perhaps because of the view that the Bible reveals primarily the conditions of our future life in another world and how we may attain unto that life, the ascetic idea has perpetuated itself in a changed, but none the less real form thru the centuries.

It ought to have been noticed, it seems, long before it was, how little stress Jesus put upon subjects which the church has emphasized in the past. The doctrine of a future life Jesus certainly taught. But he taught it as almost self evident and not in need of the bolstering up which it has received and from which it has perhaps suffered more than it gained. Some few of the conditions of that life he and his apostles thought worth while to reveal to men, but the emphasis put upon it has been out of all proportion to that upon which Jesus dwelt so much,—right motives and conduct here in this world.

Too often the message of the church to sinful men has been, "Come to Christ, in order to escape the pangs of hell in the world to come." But how unhappily rare has been the exhortation of the church, that of the Christ and apostles, "Come to Christ, that you may have freedom in his yoke, that you may have life here and now." I believe we have not realized the depth of philosophy in that saying of Jesus on the last great day of the feast, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life; and that they might have it more abundantly." How? Where? By simply assenting to certain opinions and dogmas? In another and remoter world? No! No, if that only or even primarily is meant. That and much more Jesus certainly meant. We believe he emphasized the "much more."